

Message Text

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TAGS: ECOSOC, AFINN

SUBJECT: ECOSOC: REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS
OF WOMEN; STRATEGY FOR APPROVAL OF IWY WORLD
CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

1. THE DEPARTMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO AN ITEM 14
ON THE SPRING ECOSOC PROVISIONAL AGENDA (E/5460), THE
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, WHICH,
INTER ALIA, CALLS FOR A WORLD-WIDE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONF-
ERENCE AS A PART OF THE OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
YEAR. TO ASSURE SUCCESS OF THIS INITIATIVE, THE DEPARTMENT
BELIEVES THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN PRELIMINARY KEY STEPS
WHICH THE MISSION MUST ACT UPON QUICKLY WITH THE SECRETAR-
IAT TO IMPROVE THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS.

2. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT THE IWY RESOLUTION WAS IN-
TRODUCED AS A US INITIATIVE AT THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS
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OF WOMEN MEETING IN JANUARY. IT WAS CO-SPONSORED BY 9

COUNTRIES FROM DEVELOPING AREAS AND CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 21 (US) - 3 (USSR) - 6. THE USSR OPPOSED THE RESOLUTION ON FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS. WHEN THE ISSUE OF FUNDING WAS RESOLVED BY A REORDERING OF PRIORITIES, AND THE THRUST OF THE DEBATE WAS CHANGED TO THE ISSUE OF EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN IN THE UN SYSTEM, THE SOVIETS MAINTAINED THEIR OPPOSITION.

3. (FYI: IT HAS BECOME APPARENT IN THE INTERIM SINCE JANUARY THAT SOVIET OPPOSITION TO THE RESOLUTION WAS A DISGUISED ATTEMPT TO ELIMINATE THE UN CONFERENCE SO THAT WORLD-WIDE ATTENTION WOULD BE FOCUSED DURING IWY ON A COMMUNIST CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN 1975 IN EAST BERLIN UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION (WIDF). END FYI)

4. THE DEPARTMENT ANTICIPATES THAT STRONG SOVIET OPPOSITION TO THE IWY CONFERENCE RESOLUTION WILL CONTINUE AT THE SPRING ECOSOC AND THAT A MAJOR EFFORT WILL BE REQUIRED AT ALL LEVELS OF THE MISSION TO ABORT THE SOVIET THRUST.

5. A BASIC PROBLEM TO ASSURING A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE DEBATE IN ECOSOC IS THE QUESTION OF THE TIMING OF THE CONFERENCE. THE SECRETARIAT HAS INDICATED THAT THE ONLY AVAILABLE TIME FOR THE CONFERENCE (FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE AVAILABILITY OF CONFERENCE SUPPORT STAFF) IS MID-FEBRUARY 1975. THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS, GIVEN THE SHORT LENGTH OF PREPARATORY TIME ALLOWED BY A FEBRUARY DATE, TO SEEK A LATER DATE FOR THE HOLDING OF THE CONFERENCE AND REQUESTS THE MISSION TO EXPLORE WITH THE SECRETARIAT ALTERNATIVE DATES LATER IN THE YEAR.

6. SHOULD THE SECRETARIAT BE UNABLE TO LOCATE A LATER DATE FOR THE CONFERENCE IN THE CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES, IT THEN BECOMES NECESSARY TO ASSURE THAT ACTION TO FINANCE THE HOLDING OF THE CONFERENCE BE COMPLETED BY THE SPRING SESSION OF ECOSOC TO AVOID HAVING TO GO TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE FALL FOR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS
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WHICH, IN TURN, WOULD NECESSARILY DELAY THE FINAL DECISION ON THE CONFERENCE UNTIL LATER DECEMBER, 1975, FAR TOO LATE FOR ADEQUATE PREPARATIONS BY THE SECRETARIAT FOR A FEBRUARY CONFERENCE.

7. THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT IN ORDER TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM THE CONFERENCE, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO HOLD A PREPARATORY COMMITTEE IN LATE 1974 OR EARLY 1975

NO MATTER WHAT DATE IS SELECTED FOR THE CONFERENCE ITSELF. THE DEPARTMENT'S CURRENT THINKING IS THAT SUCH A PREP-COM SHOULD BE COMPOSED OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO APPROVE THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE CONFERENCE AND REVIEW OTHER SUBSTANTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS AS MAY BE NECESSARY. BASING ITS ESTIMATES ON THE COSTS IN THE 1974-75 BUDGET FOR HOLDING A MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ITSELF, THE ADDITIONAL COSTS

TO THE UN OF THE PREP-COM SHOULD BE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$26,000. THE US DELEGATION TO THE SPRING ECOSOC WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO INTRODUCE A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR SUCH A PREP-COM SHOULD THE SECRETARIAT NOT PROPOSE IT IN THE DOCUMENTATION MADE AVAILABLE TO ECOSOC.

8. WHETHER OR NOT THE SECRETARIAT CAN LOCATE AN APPROPRIATE TIME FOR THE CONFERENCE LATER IN 1975, THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR THE SECRETARIAT TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY TO ECOSOC AT ITS SPRING SESSION FINANCING OF THE CONFERENCE. THIS WOULD BE GREATLY FACILITATED IF THE MISSION CAN PREVAIL ON USYG PHILIPPE DE SEYNES TO ANNOUNCE TO THE SPRING SESSION OF ECOSOC THAT HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO FIND WITHIN HIS ESA BUDGET THE NECESSARY FUNDS, I.E. APPROXIMATELY \$326,000 (OR 1 OF THE ESA BIENNIAL BUDGET). THIS FIGURE IS DERIVED FROM THE FINANCIAL ESTIMATES FURNISHED BY THE SECRETARIAT TO THE CSW AND THE BUDGETED COSTS OF HOLDING A SESSION OF THE CSW IN 1975, (SEE PARA 7). THE MISSION SHOULD POINT OUT THAT TO FINANCE THE CONFERENCE AND THE PREP-COM WOULD REQUIRE ONLY A MINIMAL PRO-RATA REDUCTION OF EXPENDITURES OF THE VARIOUS SUB-DIVISION OF ESA WHICH COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH MINIMUM DISTURBANCE TO APPROVED PROGRAMS BY SUCH TECHNIQUES AS DELAYS IN RECRUITMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT
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OF THE \$706,000 BUDGETED FOR THE USE OF CONSULTANTS. SUCH A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF FINANCING THE CONFERENCE AND PREP-COM IS FAR SIMPLER AND LESS CONTENTIOUS THAT ATTEMPTING TO ISOLATE PARTICULAR PROGRAMS FOR RESCHEDULING. THE US IS PREPARED TO MAKE A PROPOSAL TO THIS EFFECT FROM THE FLOOR OF ECOSOC SHOULD THE SECRETARIAT BE UNWILLING TO PUT IT FORWARD ON ITS OWN BEHALF. THEREFORE, THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT THE MISSION SHOULD APPROACH USYG DE SEYNES AT THE HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL TO URGE SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION.

9. TWO OTHER POTENTIAL STUMBLING BLOCKS TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE CONFERENCE PROPOSAL OF THE CSW IN THE ECOSOC DEBATES ARE: (A) APPARENT SECRETARIAT FAILURE TO FOCUS ON THE COMPLEXITIES OF HOLDING SUCH AN INTER-

GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE (AS AGAINST SEMINARS AND SYMPOSIA WHICH THIS PORTION OF THE SECRETARIAT IS MORE FAMILIAR WITH); AND (B) THE APPARENTLY UNREALISTICALLY LOW ESTIMATE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA OF THE COSTS THAT HOSTSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE WILL ENTAIL. THE MISSION IS URGED TO PRESS THE SECRETARIAT TO TAKE REALISTIC COGNIZANCE OF THESE TWO PROBLEMS AT THE EARLIEST DATE TO ASSURE THAT THESE ISSUES ARE NOT SEIZED UPON BY THE OPPONENTS OF THE CONFERENCE TO DEFEAT THE PROPOSAL. RUSH

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